Labour Market Bulletin

New Brunswick

April 2018

This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of New Brunswick, including the regions of Campbellton—Miramichi, Edmundston—Woodstock, Fredericton—Oromocto, Moncton—Richibucto and Saint John—St. Stephen.

OVERVIEW

Labour market conditions in New Brunswick improved in April, as the 1,100 rise in employment was the result of a significant gain in full-time employment. The gain in employment was accompanied by a comparable rise in the number of people searching for work. As a result, the unemployment rate remained unchanged from the month before.

New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Apr 2018	Mar 2018	Apr 2017	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	627.0	626.5	624.2	0.5	0.1	2.8	0.4
Labour Force ('000)	385.9	384.8	384.4	1.1	0.3	1.5	0.4
Employment ('000)	355.1	354.0	352.1	1.1	0.3	3.0	0.9
Full-Time ('000)	304.6	302.5	302.4	2.1	0.7	2.2	0.7
Part-Time ('000)	50.5	51.5	49.7	-1.0	-1.9	0.8	1.6
Unemployment ('000)	30.8	30.8	32.3	0.0	0.0	-1.5	-4.6
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.0	8.0	8.4	0.0	-	-0.4	-
Participation Rate (%)	61.5	61.4	61.6	0.1	-	-0.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.6	56.5	56.4	0.1	-	0.2	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

The year-over-year developments in the labour market were equally encouraging, as 3,000 more people were employed compared to April of 2017. Moreover, the majority of the gain was focused among full-time employment, which rose by 2,200. While the participation rate remained essentially unchanged during the twelve month period, an increase in the overall working age population (+2,800) allowed for an increase in the labour force. Altogether, the unemployment rate fell only modestly to 8.0% in April, from 8.4% a year earlier.

Compared to April of last year, there were 1,700 fewer self-employed workers, which reflects a steady decline over the past twelve months. Those losses were more than offset by an increase in the number of public and private sector employees, which rose by 2,200 and 2,400, respectively.

The improvement in overall labour market conditions during the past year was limited to those in the youth (aged 15 to 24) and senior (aged 55 and over) age categories. The level of employment among youth rose by 3,400 since April of 2017, while an additional 1,500 seniors found work during the same period. The level of employment among those in the core working aged population (25 to 54 years) fell by 1,100, as 1,400 left the labour force. Unemployment rates remained relatively fixed among all age groups over this same period.

New Brunswick Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Apr 2018	Mar 2018	Apr 2017	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	8.0	8.0	8.4	0.0	-0.4
25 years and over	7.1	7.1	7.5	0.0	-0.4
Men - 25 years and over	8.6	9.0	9.3	-0.4	-0.7
Women - 25 years and over	5.4	5.1	5.4	0.3	0.0
15 to 24 years	13.7	13.5	14.5	0.2	-0.8
Men - 15 to 24 years	15.9	15.6	18.7	0.3	-2.8
Women - 15 to 24 years	11.4	11.2	10.4	0.2	1.0

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The **Services-producing sector** registered a modest increase of 500 in the level of employment between March and April. A breakdown of the various sub-sectors reveals that much of the improvement was concentrated in a select few industries. Employment gains were strongest in **Information, culture and recreation** (+1,800), **Business, building and other support services** (+1,200) and **Other services (except public administration)** (+600).

Labour market developments between March and April were also mixed in the **Goods-producing sector**. The modest 600 increase in employment was concentrated in **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** (+800), **Construction** (+500) and **Utilities** (+200). Offsetting these gains were job losses in **Manufacturing** (-600) and **Agriculture** (-200).

Improvements in labour market conditions were more pronounced on a year-over-year basis. Between April of 2017 and April of this year, the level of employment within the **Goods-producing sector** grew by 1,200. This increase was concentrated primarily in **Manufacturing**, where 1,600 jobs were added to the economy over the period. Employment gains were also registered in **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** (+500) and **Construction** (+300). Otherwise, **Agriculture** (-600) and **Utilities** (-700) posted job losses.

Generally speaking, employment in **Manufacturing** has been trending upwards for much of the year, despite competitive challenges currently facing wood products manufacturers in the province. Countervailing and anti-dumping duties imposed by the U.S. Department of Commerce on New Brunswick softwood lumber shipments have had limited impact to date. Economic conditions appear to remain healthy overall, as wood product sales remain elevated, thanks to record-high prices, a favourable exchange rate and elevated housing construction south of the border. At the same time, employment in the broader **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** sector has been trending downwards for close to two years, despite recent positive mining developments in northern New Brunswick. The deterioration of employment in this industry dates back to early 2014, when the Brunswick Mine closed its doors and left several hundred people out of work.

The level of employment in the **Services-producing sector** grew by 1,800 in the twelve months to April, driven largely by improvements in **Health care and social assistance**, which added 3,900 jobs during this period. This growth is essentially a continuation of a longer-term trend which began almost a decade ago, driven by the increased demand for health and social services associated with the province's ageing population. Also reporting upswings in employment were **Information, culture and recreation** (+1,600) and **Professional, scientific and technical services** (+900).

New Brunswick Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Apr 2018	Mar 2018	Apr 2017	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	355.1	354.0	352.1	1.1	0.3	3.0	0.9
Goods-producing sector	75.1	74.5	73.9	0.6	0.8	1.2	1.6
Agriculture	5.2	5.4	5.8	-0.2	-3.7	-0.6	-10.3
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	8.7	7.9	8.2	0.8	10.1	0.5	6.1
Utilities	3.3	3.1	4.0	0.2	6.5	-0.7	-17.5
Construction	25.2	24.7	24.9	0.5	2.0	0.3	1.2
Manufacturing	32.7	33.3	31.1	-0.6	-1.8	1.6	5.1
Services-producing sector	280.0	279.5	278.2	0.5	0.2	1.8	0.6
Trade	54.1	55.0	57.7	-0.9	-1.6	-3.6	-6.2
Transportation and warehousing	17.3	17.9	16.8	-0.6	-3.4	0.5	3.0
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	16.7	16.6	17.2	0.1	0.6	-0.5	-2.9
Professional, scientific and technical services	16.6	17.1	15.7	-0.5	-2.9	0.9	5.7
Business, building and other support services	15.7	14.5	15.1	1.2	8.3	0.6	4.0
Educational services	27.0	26.7	26.8	0.3	1.1	0.2	0.7
Health care and social assistance	60.4	61.2	56.5	-0.8	-1.3	3.9	6.9
Information, culture and recreation	11.8	10.0	10.2	1.8	18.0	1.6	15.7
Accommodation and food services	21.7	22.5	23.0	-0.8	-3.6	-1.3	-5.7
Other services	15.1	14.5	15.2	0.6	4.1	-0.1	-0.7
Public administration	23.6	23.5	24.0	0.1	0.4	-0.4	-1.7

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0088

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

The unemployment rate in the **Campbellton-Miramichi** economic region fell by 3.7 percentage points to 14.4% over the past year. The catalyst was a 3,900 increase in the level of employment, which more than doubled the number of entrants into the labour force. Employment gains were split fairly evenly between full-time and part-time work.

The **Moncton-Richibucto** economic region led all regions in employment growth, as 5,200 more people were employed in April of this year compared to April 2017. An industry breakdown reveals that much of this gain was concentrated in Health care and social assistance, which added 3,000 jobs over this period. The strong rise in the participation rate, meanwhile, resulted in an influx of 4,700 workers into the labour force. This helped limit the downward movement in the unemployment rate, which fell to 9.1%, from 8.2%.

Labour market conditions deteriorated in the **Saint John-St. Stephen** economic region in the twelve months leading up to April of this year. The 7,500 decline in the level of employment during this period was met with an even greater number of people leaving the labour force. The participation rate fell considerably in the region over the past year, which explains why the unemployment rate remained little changed at 7.1% in April. Job losses were relatively broad-based across most sectors.

Labour market conditions improved somewhat in the **Fredericton-Oromocto** economic region during the past year. The 1,100 increase in the number of persons employed was split almost evenly between full-time and part-time work. An even greater number of entrants into the labour force helped lift the unemployment rate by 0.7 of a percentage point to 8.5%. The growth in the labour force was supported both by a rise in the working age population and a rise in the participation rate, which remains a full percentage point above its April 2017 figure.

The modest 400 increase in employment in the **Edmundston-Woodstock** economic region is somewhat encouraging given that it was driven by a healthy 1,800 gain in full-time employment. There was little change in the size of the labour force, as a small decline in the working age population was broadly offset by a rise in the

participation rate. The unemployment rate shrank by 0.6 of a percentage point to 8.4%. The region's reliance on the forestry sector makes it vulnerable to countervailing and anti-dumping duties imposed on New Brunswick softwood lumber producers by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Apr 2018 ('000)	Apr 2017 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Apr 2018 (%)	Apr 2017 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
New Brunswick	343.0	339.9	0.9	9.2	9.9	-0.7
Economic Regions						
Campbellton-Miramichi	59.7	55.8	7.0	14.4	18.1	-3.7
Moncton-Richibucto	105.7	100.5	5.2	8.2	9.1	-0.9
Saint John-St. Stephen	75.9	83.4	-9.0	7.1	6.9	0.2
Fredericton-Oromocto	65.9	64.8	1.7	8.5	7.8	0.7
Edmundston-Woodstock	35.8	35.4	1.1	8.4	9.0	-0.6

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0122

Note: *In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.*

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For information on the Labour Force Survey*, please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: www.statcan.gc.ca*

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